

Agriculture

Mission

To promote agriculture, rural development, and sustainable communities while protecting public health through the regulation and inspection of meat, poultry, and dairy production, and programs to prevent, control, and eradicate animal diseases.

Summary of Activities



Lt. Governor
Katherine L. Davis
Commissioner
of Agriculture

Indiana has a long and rich tradition as a leader in the agricultural industry. There are 63,000 farms in the state, utilizing over 15 million acres of land, and selling approximately \$4.5 billion worth of products. The Lieutenant Governor serves as Indiana's Commissioner of Agriculture. The **Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture (OCA)** promotes Indiana agriculture and rural development and provides administrative support for the **Indiana Commission for Agriculture & Rural Development (ICARD)**, which advises the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Legislature on agricultural issues; the **Indiana Land Resources Council (ILRC)**, which addresses land use issues; the **Indiana Grain Buyers & Warehouse Licensing Agency (IGBWL)**, which regulates grain storage and grain buyers; and the **Indiana Grain Indemnity Corporation (IGIC)**, which insures producers against financial failures in the grain industry. The OCA also administers four grant programs.

The **Board of Animal Health (BOAH)** is an independent agency responsible for promoting public health and safety through the regulation of animal health. The BOAH licenses livestock dealers; regulates the meat, poultry, and dairy industries; and manages programs for the prevention, suppression, control, and eradication of infectious diseases affecting livestock and pets.

External Factors

Indiana's population grew by nine percent during the 1990's, increasing competition for land and natural resources at a time when agricultural commodity and livestock market prices remain at or near historically low levels. Land converted to other uses is permanently lost for agriculture. Indiana's total farm acreage has decreased 35% since 1900. Increased globalization requires Indiana farmers to compete on an international scale.

Increased trade with foreign nations brings an increased risk of the introduction of animal diseases into the state. The identification of a case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (a.k.a. "Mad Cow Disease") in Canada underscores the need for continuous vigilance by the BOAH to ensure food safety and security. The rapid spread of the West Nile virus has presented significant challenges, with 722 horses testing positive for the disease in 2002; up from just one in 2001. An informal survey of veterinarians indicated that many more animals were likely infected. An outbreak of monkeypox infections in humans in the spring of 2003 required the BOAH to issue emergency rules banning the sale and importation of prairie dogs and Gambian rats as exotic pets.

Evaluation and Accomplishments

In FY 2002 OCA programs assisted 151 value added agribusiness projects, provided legal and financial counseling to over 500 farmers, and distributed over \$2.8 million dollars in grants for livestock industry promotion, rural rehabilitation, and research on new processes and products intended to add value to Indiana agricultural commodities. The OCA facilitated the start-up of six new agricultural cooperatives and provided international trade assistance to 350 clients. The OCA also provides a three-day agricultural seminar for U.S. diplomats to assist them in representing U.S. agricultural interests overseas.



The ICARD developed a new Strategic Plan for Indiana Agriculture to provide direction for sustaining and expanding agricultural industry. The IGBWLA conducted 1,074 field audits of grain buyers and warehouses. Audited companies presented no claims against the Indiana Grain Indemnity Corporation. The ILRC created a Rural Wastewater Taskforce to develop recommendations on decentralized and small community wastewater management issues and developed the first Indiana Farmland Protection Plan.

BOAH's State Annex for Veterinary Emergencies (SAVE) is the first statewide emergency response network in the nation. Established in cooperation with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), the SAVE team responds to veterinary emergencies in Governor-declared disaster situations. When a large-scale flood, tornado or other disaster strikes, specially trained veterinarians, technicians, and animal control personnel respond to the scene. Together, in a unique public-private partnership, they coordinate efforts to evacuate, rescue, treat, and shelter animals in distress. After more than two decades of effort the BOAH's pseudorabies eradication program successfully eliminated this viral swine disease from Indiana.

Indiana's Rank in U.S. Agriculture Foreign Exports based on 2002 Cash Receipts			
Rank	Product	Dollars	% of U.S. Exports
10th	Total All Commodities	1,696,200,000	2.7
3rd	Soybeans & Products	694,200,000	9.5
4th	Feed Grains & Products	569,900,000	8.4
13th	Live Animals & Meat, Excl. Poultry	123,300,000	2.0
7th	Poultry & Products	82,800,000	3.6
21st	Wheat & Products	81,400,000	1.7
9th	Seeds	28,000,000	3.3
23rd	Feed & Fodder	24,500,000	1.3
15th	Dairy Products	13,300,000	1.3
12th	Tobacco, Unmanufactured	10,400,000	0.9
31st	Vegetables & Prepared Vegetables	5,900,000	0.1
20th	Fruit & Prepared Nuts	5,200,000	0.2
19th	Fats, Oils & Greases	2,700,000	0.6
24th	Hides & Skins	2,300,000	0.1

Source: Indiana Agricultural Statistics Service

Plans for the Biennium

The OCA will continue efforts to expand Indiana agricultural exports, provide financial assistance and research funding for agriculture, and financial and legal counseling to farmers. ICARD will refocus its mission and strategy by updating its strategic plan. New initiatives include an agri-tourism program in partnership with the Department of Commerce Tourism Division and a Community Kitchen initiative to encourage new food manufacturing enterprises in Indiana.

The BOAH plans to strengthen livestock monitoring and surveillance programs, pursue additional specialized training opportunities for veterinarians and field staff, broaden the information available to the public, and continue evaluation of all inspection programs to ensure public health, safety and welfare.

